

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 5, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We write in support of the Washington County, Maryland Board of County Commissioners' request to overturn the Essential Air Service (EAS) Termination Notice DOT-OST 2006 in the Order 2019-8-17.

As stated in our April 18, 2019 letter to you in support of the Hagerstown Regional Airport's waiver request, we continue to believe that having a regional airport in Western Maryland is essential to enable access to larger hub airports. We believe there is compelling data that demonstrates the airport's recent growth and expected continued growth in the near future. In the last nine months the Hagerstown Regional Airport and Southern Airways have initiated a new marketing campaign that is starting to see results, including an increase in average daily enplanement to over 10.

In addition to Order 2019-8-17's failure to consider the recent strides made by the airport, we are concerned about impact the loss of EAS service at the airport will have on the Transportation Security Administration workforce currently assigned to the airport. Losing EAS service means that the TSA agents will have a reduced schedule and will not be needed on a daily basis at the airport. In addition, the Federal Aviation Administration has been investing in the airport's infrastructure for years, most recently awarding a \$1 million grant on July 9, 2019 to start construction on a terminal expansion project to expand and improve the facility. To invest in the airport to accommodate projected growth while simultaneously threatening that growth by denying the airport's EAS waiver appears contradictory and shortsighted.

We believe that the decision to terminate EAS at the Hagerstown Regional Airport should be reassessed to support the continued growth of this important facility in Western Maryland, and we urge you to do so in a timely manner so as to minimize the negative economic impacts to the region it serves.

Thank you for your consideration.

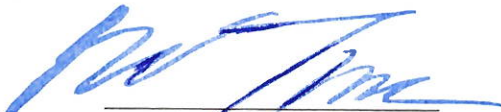
Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



David Trone
Member of Congress